

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

1. (Currently Amended) A clamp apparatus for converting rectilinear motion of a cylinder into rotary motion by means of a toggle link mechanism to clamp a workpiece by using an arm, said clamp apparatus comprising a cover member which is provided openably/closably on a main cylinder body so that a release means for unclamping said arm is covered therewith, wherein said cover member is pivotably and rotatably attached permanently to said main cylinder body.

2. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said release means includes a knuckle joint directly connected to said arm, and said knuckle joint has a release projection covered with said cover member.

3. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said release projection is bifurcated and has two branches, and said cover member covers projections of said two branches.

4. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said cover member includes a pair of first and second plate members which extend in parallel to one another along an

axis of said main cylinder body of said cylinder, and a third plate member which bridges said first and second plate members, and said first and second plate members are pivotably and rotatably attached to said main cylinder body.

5. (Currently Amended) The clamp apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said cover member has a lock mechanism for ~~{being locked to}~~ locking said cover member in a closed position on said main cylinder body of said cylinder.

6. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 4 wherein said cover member has a tongue which is formed integrally with said third plate member, and said cover member is openable/closable by said tongue.

7. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said main cylinder body of said cylinder has, at one end thereof, a first step and a second step which have different heights, and a release projection of said release means protrudes from said first step section while being covered with said cover member.

8. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said cover member is pivotably attached to said second step section.

9. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 7, wherein an attachment member is provided on said first step and/or said second step, and said attachment member is provided with a lock mechanism for engaging with said cover member.

10. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said lock mechanism includes an elongated hole for engaging with a projection formed on said cover member.

11. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said cover member has at least a curved portion.

12. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said third plate member has a curved shape.

13. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said cover member is made of a metal member.

14. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 13, wherein an outer surface of said cover member is coated with a member that is excellent in smoothness.

15. (Original) The clamp apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said member excellent in smoothness comprises polytetrafluoroethylene.

16. (New) A clamp apparatus for converting rectilinear motion of a cylinder into rotary motion by means of a toggle link mechanism to clamp a workpiece by using an arm, said clamp apparatus comprising a cover member which is provided openably/closably on a main cylinder body so that a release means for unclamping said arm is covered therewith, wherein said cover member includes a pair of first and second plate members which extend in parallel to one another along an axis of said main cylinder body of said cylinder, and a third plate member which bridges said first and second plate members, and said first and second plate members are pivotably and rotatably attached to said main cylinder body.

17. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said release means includes a knuckle joint directly connected to said arm, and said knuckle joint has a release projection covered with said cover member.

18. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said release projection is bifurcated and has two branches, and said cover member covers projections of said two branches.

19. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said cover member has a lock mechanism for locking said cover member in a closed position on said main cylinder body of said cylinder.

20. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said cover member has a tongue which is formed integrally with said third plate member, and said cover member is openable/closable by said tongue.

21. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said main cylinder body of said cylinder has, at one end thereof, a first step and a second step which have different heights, and a release projection of said release means protrudes from said first step section while being covered with said cover member.

22. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said cover member is pivotably attached to said second step section.

23. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 21, wherein an attachment member is provided on said first step and/or said second step, and said attachment member is provided with a lock mechanism for engaging with said cover member.

24. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said lock mechanism includes an elongated hole for engaging with a projection formed on said cover member.

25. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said cover member has at least a curved portion.

26. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said third plate member has a curved shape.

27. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said cover member is made of a metal member.

28. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 27, wherein an outer surface of said cover member is coated with a member that is excellent in smoothness.

29. (New) The clamp apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said member excellent in smoothness comprises polytetrafluoroethylene.